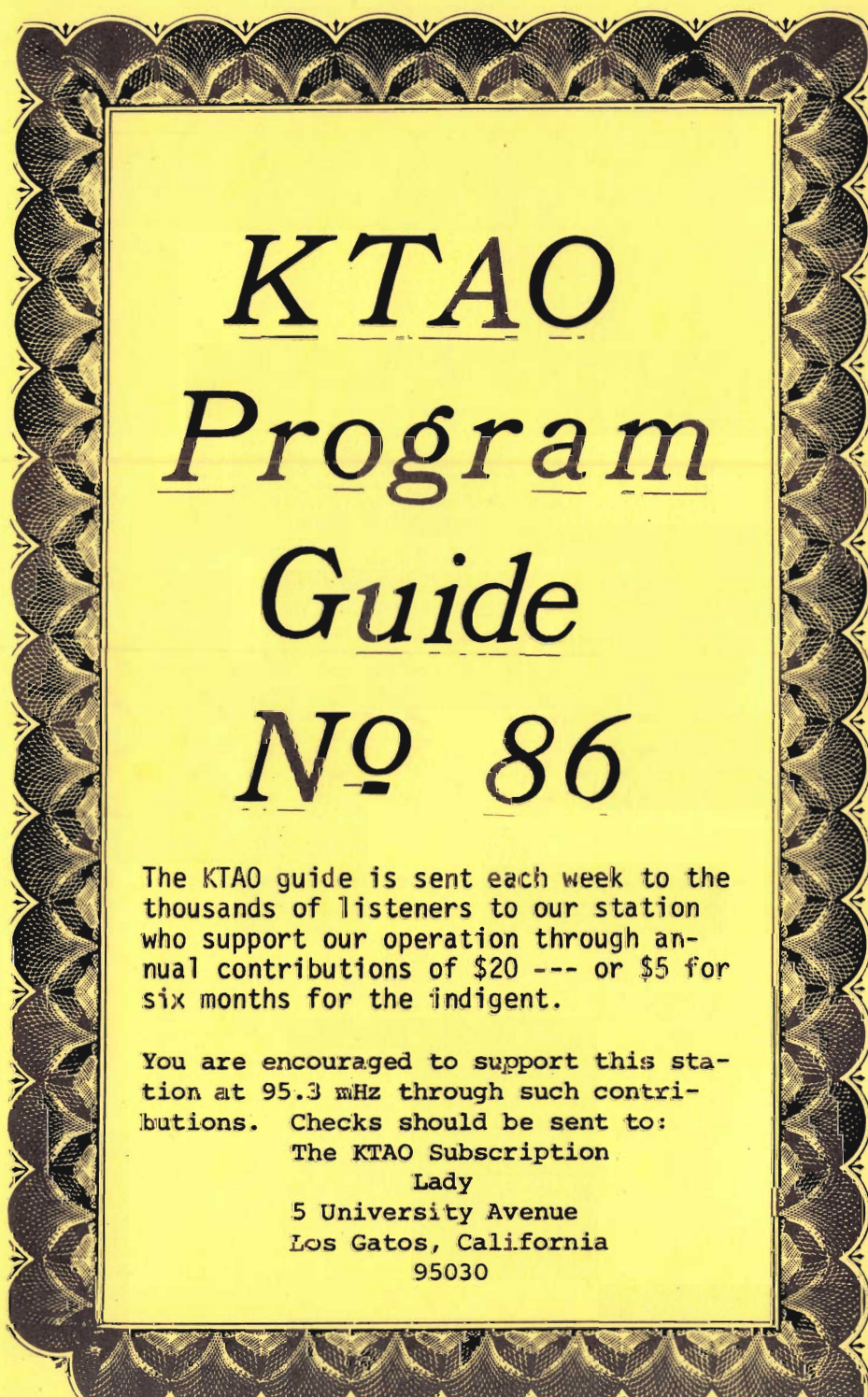


The
Awful
Death
of
The
San Jose
Mercury-News



KTAO

Program

Guide

No 86

The KTAO guide is sent each week to the thousands of listeners to our station who support our operation through annual contributions of \$20 --- or \$5 for six months for the indigent.

You are encouraged to support this station at 95.3 MHz through such contributions. Checks should be sent to:

The KTAO Subscription

Lady


5 University Avenue

Los Gatos, California

95030

As of October 1, KTAO carries no commercial announcements Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday until noon. On Sundays, there are no commercial announcements during the E. Vernon Buck Ethnic Music Program.

This gives us more freedom to program the outrageous musics and talks (some of which are listed further along in this guide) which, for the first time, come out of Santa Clara County---and our various corresponding stations.

The KTAO transmitter is located high in the fleecy clouds of Mount Uhmunum at 1800 feet. This height, combined with our good spirits, makes it possible to hear  our signal in much of the Bay Area and indeed, it is said, when the Aether Sprites are at work --- in parts of Santa Cruz and Marin County as well.

The signal is stereo, the purpose is fairly large, and the meaning of it all is, naturally, incomprehensible.

3

KTAO is actively seeking minority volunteers. We are trying to get --- on the air --- those members of Black, Chicano, Indian, or Oriental groups who will program intelligently and well to their culture. If you are, or know, such a person who would be willing to volunteer announce for KTAO--- morning, afternoon, or evening---please call us at ELbow 4-6622.

Mercury News Go Poo!

"There is nothing to fear," I said, brightly: "This newspaper will suffer the same miserable demise as that awful New York Mirror. With the same handsome circulation, and the same giant advertising budget, sometime in the next five or ten or fifteen years--- suddenly, the San Jose Mercury News will be no more.

4

"For you see," I said, conscious of the outrageousness and righteousness of my words: "each year the cost of newsprint will go up. Each year, the printers union will make more and more unreasonable

demands. Each year the cost of production of this fat and ugly publication will go up and up and up---bureaucracy will perpetuate itself; the union (blind as they must always be---to their destruction potential) will carry the cost of this terrible operation beyond all sensibility. (I mean, there is a price one pays for producing an object completely devoid of pride: and it is that the means of production --- in this case, the printers --- don't give a good goddamn whether the operation survives or not: you have to pay them, and pay them well, to produce something without a mote of spirit or worth.)

"No," I say: "this grotesquery must collapse. The Mercury-News must die: and not through the morbid antics of the publisher; nor, indeed, through the spectre of mismanagement. And most certainly---it will not be brought to its knees by the single sad fact that it is no newspaper at all---but rather



Fig. 1

5

A Quiet Afternoon in the
Publisher's Office

6



Fig. 2
Someone Asks the Business
Manager if they can hire
A Chicano Reporter



a monster shopping center throwaway,
perhaps the largest throw-away in the
world.

"No, technology will destroy this fat
and gross giant. Technology---in the
form of offset (which no union in its
right mind will permit), plus sheer
blindness of union negotiators, will
ruin this fountain-of-plenty. (And,"
I said as a footnote, "like the New
York Mirror, seven years after its un-
expected demise, it will be replaced by
another Mercury-News. Same format,
same loathing for hard-and-real news;
same miserable editorial stance. But
it will have something new: one-twentieth
of the present staff, a small, weak-union,
and all made possible through the miracle
of offset.")

I must say it was a bit difficult for
either of us to believe this amazing
bit of news. I mean, sitting in the
middle of this plastic-and-chrome
surgical ward called Ridder Park, with

the fountains squirting, and the presses rumbling, and the asphalt parking lot jam-packed full of new and shiny cars: sitting in the midst of this complex, it was difficult for us to believe that a few years would see this whole mess sold off to San Jose State College for use as a museum in honor of dullness and mismanagement. The whole goddamned place breathed the ecological destructiveness which was the raison d'être of the county of Santa Clara.

We were in the plastic-and-chrome dining hall of the San Jose Mercury-News. The walls were lined with coin-operated soup and salad and cigar machines. We had spent an hour visiting the enormously prosperous treacle gold mine of the Ridder Enterprises Monopoly---located at the edge of Highway 17, the town of San Jose, and all possible reason for existence.

"Being here reminds me of being in Spain," I said to my friend. "Despite what they say, there is freedom of

** This would be leaving ^{him} ~~at~~ ~~home~~ ~~no employment~~ **

*Out of place & in moult -
Nothing to do but ~~to~~ sit & p.^h his nail
In the cramp etc.*

Fig. 3
The Real Estate Editor
Puts Together A Column
on the Desecration of
Santa Clara Co.

speech in Spain. Any man can voice his disapproval of the regime, freely and easily. In any cafe or cantina. Over his tinto, he can gripe and grouch and grumble, and no-one will bother him. There is freedom of speech there, as there is here....

"...and it says that you must never write it down. You can bitch and moan and complain, but if you commit it to the typewriter, to print---then you are in trouble.

"Here at the Mercury News, you can complain all day about the management, and the lacks and about the fact that this is no newspaper at all. But---in perfect fitting punishment for reporters and writers (who are often so inarticulate with the spoken word) you cannot print it and publish it. For to do so would be to flaunt one's discontent---and make ones survival

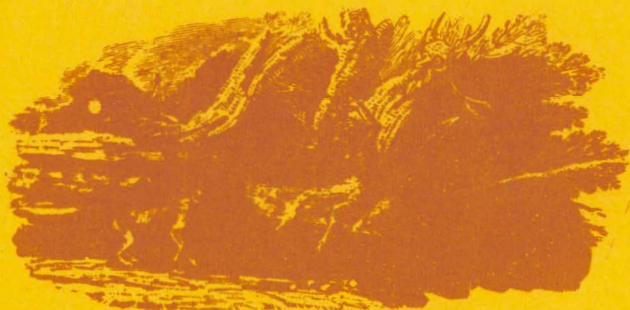


Fig. 4

A Young Reporter Suggests
to the Managing Editor a
In-Depth Expose of Police-
Black Relations in San
Jose.

doubtful. As soon as you commit the reality of this newspapers vileness to the page---then it becomes actionable."

In my visits through the plant that makes our daily sludge-paper possible---I was amazed. No: not at the horror of architecture which houses the behemoth. Nor at the plastic-and-tile lined halls of this journalistic whore-house. No: what was amazing was that some human beings, with some human ideals and characteristics, had survived in this charnel house. That for instance, there are still printers who play cards back in the press room: on a low table stretched out with newsprint, wearing their paper caps (when ever has there been a press room without at least one of those paper caps?) Or that, laid out on two giant rolls of newsprint, that there can be a pressman who wads up some paper for a pillow, and lays out to rest --- despite the racket of the room. One has to be amazed at the touches of humanity in the sterility of environment and thought called Ridder Park.

9
One is amazed in the asphalt-lined home of this behemoth, that there still remains a hunched over, motherly Linotype operator. In a composing room where 98% of the type is set by yellow punched tape, there she sits, as she must have sat for 30 years now, veined fingers playing over the keys, setting the corrections for what the computer-spaced tape has messed up.

"In Seattle, I tell my friend, "there is another fat wormy newspaper. It is



Fig. 5
An Executive Editorial Meeting Where
Some Hard News Stories Are Being Dis-
cussed

called the Seattle Times. It is, of course, partially owned by the Ridder combine. It is almost as bland, almost (but not quite) as boring as this one. Still, I was amazed by the freedom of certain writers. I was amazed at the depth of reporting which would casually seep into that monolithic bore of a newspaper: sometimes controversial articles tucked in on page 63 or 79."

Because in a newspaper where the content—of the advertisements is more important than the content of the editorials---a writer can often slip in incredibly anti-establishment thoughts and ideas. The editors simply are too old and bored to really care. Their whoredom has dulled their eyes and their minds, and for those who are willing to put up with the daily

piggery---there are possibilities for unlimited subterfuge and subtlety.

11

I probably did not emphasize the freedom too much to my friend, the newspaperman. Because I was too discouraged. Depressed, really. At the waste. That the entire ten acre orchard should have been plowed down, the land pasted with asphalt and phoney fountains, the flat dull building erected --- that all this waste could take place. That the thousand workers for this newspaper --- with all its complex of distribution and all the man-hours of typesetting, composing, layout, printing, street sales, home delivery: that this massive complex could and should be activated so that the owner could take another trip to Martinique, could buy a more expensive bottle of gin; so that the executive offices could have a fireplace, and giant hanging lamps, and even more booze...and to what purpose.

It is waste, pure and simple. It is the tragedy of resources unused, untouched. The beauty and complexity of the mind--- left to squander itself in poverty. The beauty and charm of the human body--- degrading itself in fat and alcohol. The tragedy that men's hopes and aspirations are beaten to death with ugliness, and grossness, and nauseating weakness.

It wasn't so much the facts that my friend regaled me with...the fact that the writing and reporting and editorial staff of the San Jose Mercury News was and is smaller than the Redwood City Tribune. Nor is it that the columns which do get printed are

always stale, and out-of-date; Rick Dubrow's television column from Los Angeles three weeks late --- and that makes up the radio-television page. Nor is it that profit-sharing and employee stock ownership are unheard of---or that minority employment represents less than 3% of the total---in a county with at least 10% minority population.

These facts alone should be enough to prompt some vigorous action by the dispossessed and the poor: should be enough to create some intense direct confrontation from the Black, or Chicano community. But even this vigor is stultified by the thick waste of torpid page-after-page of advertisements. "Perhaps," I think: "That is how ~~one~~ should protect oneself from the rage of the streets. Simply become so witless and boring that no-one cares to wade through



1
2

Fig. 6
A Profit-Sharing Plan for the Employees is Discussed with the General Manager

all the sludge to find if there is actually reason for offense."

The pity and sterility that means San Jose Mercury News is more elusive than that. It is the utter and final corruption of the spirit and hope of American journalism. It is that all is torn up and scattered through the endless, mindless, grotesque pursuit of bucks. Bucks. Dollars. Profit. Jesus Mary & Joseph! All the joys and challenges of Christly Freedom of Speech and Press: smothered in a profit-loss statement. Is it possible?...

13

...is it possible that a miracle of freedom---where one is legally permitted to write at length and with bitterness and honesty about the wrongs of a country or a world: is it possible that this freedom for which innumerable lives, for which incredible amounts of good blood was split for so many years...

...is it possible that this miraculous freedom is to be mushed into the dirt through the simple driven nauseating desire to make yet another fortune? Is this possible?

But of course. And who could doubt it? And for what reason? It stands there--- Ridder Park, in all its pre-processed splendor---as a testament to the greed and buck-love of those who might, at one time, have given us some hope about the worth of American journalistic purpose.

Those of us who love this country enough to worry about its continuation must worry about the destruction of its values in such a fat and lardlike way. For the demise of America will not come through some longhairs picketing and screaming in the streets; nor will it come about through confrontation, militants demanding their rights; nor indeed will it come about through some of those raunchy 'underground' newspapers, with their outrageous columns, and statements, and opinions.

14

No: the gravest challenge we have to our survival and hope and weird and wondrous freedoms is this very grotesque newspaper, this ominous distortion of the rights of freedom, and property, and print.

For by drowning our hopes in fifteen tons (daily) of newsprint and White Front and Eastridge ads, this loathesome excuse for the fourth estate might well lull us into believing that there is nothing in our future, and the future of all media in this country, but torpidity, and drunkenness, and vacuous profit statements.

:programs

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH

9AM Ecstasy in Education. Geo P Leonard (of the recently demised LOOK) describing creative aspects of new educations.

NOON Classic Jazz. Mike Duffy from KRAB.

7 PM The Richard A C Greene Election Rally.

When Greene ran for Land Commissioner (Wn State, 1968) they thought he might lose, since he campaigned from Hawaii. He did, but his workers had a ball while so doing.

THURSDAY, OCT. 14

9AM Herbert St Charles. Humor from KDNA.

11A Redeye Radio. Bob Madge.

5 P Dwight Freeman begins jazz early on.

8 PM The San Jose Spiritual Life Crusade.

L Milam & B Madge interviewed three pastors who are responsible for bringing the SLIC to our area---and the interview runs wild on questions of spirituality, christianity, humility, et al.

FRIDAY, OCT. 15

9.A With an ear to the ground. Interviews and such from KBOO, Portland.

10A What is Nexus? A plan for using unemployed teachers creatively: an interview with Linda Williams.

2-6P Laura Heffron with news and musics for the women in our lives.

8PM The Declaration of Independence... a news tape from KDNA & The Miami Hrlld.

MONDAY, OCT. 18

9 A Cutups. A repeat of the interview with Dirk van Nouhuys---and poetry for computers, cutup and stuck back together.

11:30 Backpacking. An introduction, with Roky. Equipment, and such.

1:30 Live meetings of the San Jose City.

5PM Jean Shepherd. Monologues from WOR.

6PM Soul Jazz with Nate.

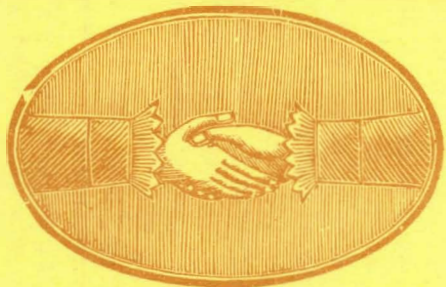
9PM Great Chicago Piano Blues Players.

TUESDAY, OCT. 19

7-11 The Early Morning program with War & Peace Spotlight & Environment Rpts (KDNA)

1PM A Childs World. Something from WYSO.

5PM Readings from The Little Prince with Brooke Harrow, of Berkeley.



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